

Regional EMS Council Designation

Service Area Process Action Team Charter

Purpose

A process action team (PAT) is being created to evaluate the existing designated regional service areas and recommend the most effective and efficient arrangement of regional service areas, based on numerous national and state criteria, considerations and attributes. This PAT will be comprised of representatives of the following entities that comprise the EMS system in the Commonwealth of Virginia:

- 2 executive directors of existing EMS Councils
- 2 Presidents of the Board of Directors of existing EMS Councils
- A current and active Operational Medical Director (OMD) in Virginia.
- A current member of the Governor's EMS Advisory Board
- A physician member of the Governor's EMS Advisory Board
- A representative of a Designated Trauma Center in Virginia
- A representative of a urban based EMS service
- A representative of a rural based EMS service
- A representative of the Virginia Professional Fire Fighters
- Current President of VAVRS
- Current President of VAGEMSA
- Current President of VFCA
- The Director of the OEMS
- The Deputy Commissioner of Emergency Preparedness and Response (ex-officio member)

The team's primary role is to present a proposed map for establishment, operation, administration, and maintenance of an Emergency Medical Services system which provides for the coordination and facilitation of personnel, facilities and equipment for the effective and coordinated delivery of emergency health care on a regional level in the Commonwealth.

Members of the PAT will be required to participate in team meetings, conference calls, and other reviews at the call of the PAT chair.

Importance

Currently there is insufficient coordination, disparities in quality of care, lack of readiness for disasters, and divided professional identity. Regional EMS Councils have substantial variation regarding emergency and trauma care systems. Changes in the Regional EMS Council service areas should help to address these issues as they pertain to the EMS system in Virginia.

Historically, efforts to establish a more integrated, coordinated, regionalized emergency care system have stalled because of deeply entrenched political interests and cultural attitudes, silos and fragmentation. The role of the PAT is to provide cooperative and visionary leadership to develop an effective and efficient regional EMS system in the Commonwealth.

Scope

The recommendations of the PAT should consider the following objectives::

- Effective coordination of regional flow of patients. To implement a regional EMS system that is a natural catchment area for EMS provision for most, if not all, patients in the designated area. Arrangement must allow community hospitals, trauma centers, and pre-hospital EMS to work effectively together.

- Promote the integration of community and public health systems and resources, and disaster response training and readiness of EMS personnel for terrorist attacks, natural disasters, or other public health emergencies.
- Organize regional service areas to establish a “critical mass” capable of conducting system performance improvement using boundaries that better resemble specialty regions for trauma, stroke, etc. The recent ASMI study on the Regional EMS Councils in Virginia stated “The resulting regions would be larger, have deeper staff resources, affect some economies of scale, be able to offer varying services to urban and rural providers, and begin to implement system performance improvement on a scale and with boundaries better resembling specialty care regions.”
- Improved efficiencies in coordination, planning, preparedness, and administration of services on a regional level. Proposed regional service areas must be fully integrated with local health districts, hospital planning and preparedness regions, and health system agency service areas.
- Identify the most effective geographic deployment of resources. The proposed regional service areas shall take into consideration the areas of demographic concentration, as well as some of the natural geographic boundaries (mountains, rivers, etc.) that exist in Virginia.
- Promote the goal of a more integrated, coordinated, and accountable regionalized emergency medical care system.
- Promote the development of “regional accountable systems” while minimizing their differences and eliminating fragmentation of services.
- Consider the location of existing licensed EMS agencies and vehicles, future growth and expansion of these services, and create opportunities to enhance the facilitation, coordination and integration of emergency medical services on a regional level.
- Raise the overall level of service and decrease the variations that exist, and promote an enhanced, comprehensive delivery of services to a larger number of EMS system stakeholders.

Deliverables

The PAT will make a recommendations and presentations to the State EMS Advisory Board at future meetings of the Board.

Resources

Meals, travel and lodging will be provided by OEMS for PAT meetings. The OEMS EMS Systems Planner will be assigned as staff to the PAT.